

# ***Dangerous Weeds: Not Getting Burned by Wild Parsnip***

Contact: Angela Isackson, Three Rivers Park District  
(763) 694-7817 office, [Alsackson@threeriversparkdistrict.org](mailto:Alsackson@threeriversparkdistrict.org)

Three Rivers Park District (TRPD) is partnering with Credit River Township to tackle an invasive plant with human health concerns, Wild Parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*). It looks harmless on the surface with yellow blooms, similar to our MN native plant Golden Alexander (see photo insert), but contact with the Wild Parsnip's sap can cause severe blistering and swelling when exposed to sunlight called phyto-photo-dermatitis.

Wild Parsnip has invaded the ditch along Murphy Lake Blvd south of Savage. For the safety of park goers and citizens as well the protection of the native habitat in Murphy Hanrehan Park Reserve, staff from these agencies are developing a management plan to control this dangerous plant. The initial plan is to mow before the plant goes to seed in mid-late June to prevent further spread into surrounding areas and roadways.

In order to effectively control Wild Parsnip, mowing and herbicide spot treatments will have to be repeated annually for the next 4-5 years. While it is extremely difficult to remove an aggressive invasive such as Wild Parsnip completely from an area, a successful management plan will knock the population down to smaller, safer numbers.

Careful consideration of application methods and active ingredients of herbicides will be implemented to avoid herbicide damage to nontarget plants and associated pollinators, such as avoiding broadcast spraying or pellet dispersal. Instead, spot treatments will be utilized to allow for selective control.

To learn more check out this site from the Midwest Invasive Species Information Network.  
<http://www.misin.msu.edu/train/species/WildParsnip/>

Questions and concerns may be directed to Three Rivers Park District's Invasive Species Coordinator at 763-694-7817.



Note: Wild parsnip (left) has a grooved stem, whereas native Golden alexander (right) has a smooth and shiny stem.